

# Devotional Studies No. 10

## **The Gospel, the Church, and the Bible in the Lives of God's People**

It is time that Christians reexamine what the Gospel and the Church and the Bible really mean in their every day walk with God. Has the Good News of God made a difference in your way of life? Has the Christian community made a modification in your walk with God? Has the written Revelation of God altered your life with the Trinity? What is your reaction to God's grace? If you wish to understand the true meaning of the word *Gospel* and the role that the Church plays in one's individual life, one must go to the ultimate authority—the Word of God. Is your life under the influence of the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Christ with its call for repentance and transformation of one's priorities? Is your body, soul, and spirit under God's authority that is set forth in His Holy Scripture? If so, then your life is a time of peace and joy in believing all that the prophets have written concerning Jesus and His kingdom.

Once again, is your walk a stroll under God's Way of salvation in and through Jesus? What does it mean for one to bring one's life under the sway of God's redemption in Christ? Surely, it means that one's living is no longer simply his or her own. It means that one's daily activities are no longer controlled by Satan's dominion, but rather restricted by God's grace. When the Cross of Jesus is not the center of gravity for the believer, then, in due time, Christianity loses its moral and public energy. Either the Cross of Jesus is one's life or it is not. Christians are confronted on a daily basis to make a decision between two kingdoms—the kingdom of God versus the kingdom of humanity.

Christians need to replace the Cross of Christ as the center of their lives. In my (Dallas Burdette) fifty-five years of ministry, I have witnessed hundreds of individuals who have ceased to gather with the people of God—Sunday is no longer relevant to their way of thinking. The Church, or God's family, has little weight, or power, in their lives. They have lost their zeal, or fervor, for the business of God. Yet, in spite of one's failings, God's love is still a love that is undaunted by ingratitude, disobedience, and an unresponsive love. He is still standing as the heart's door requesting to come in. Christ's death set up a new relationship—a covenant between God and humanity, a covenant based on the Atonement of Christ. In the Atonement of Christ, one is confronted with God's act of redemption and with God's act of holiness.

One still witnesses the long-suffering and loving kindness of God as He continues to reach out to a people who have left their first love. It seems to this author that for those who have known God, there can be no final peace or joy apart from Him. Are you living your life apart from Christ? What does the church of Jesus mean to you? How do you react to the written Word of God? Is Sunday just another day—a day that has no relevance to the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus? Have you accepted Jesus as

Lord in your life? If so, don't forget that God makes His claim upon everyone who receives His Son as the Savior of the world. For one to be outside Jesus the Messiah is to be one who is devoid of hope. Outside Christ, one is conscious that individuals are under God's wrath. If the world of humanity is not under God's wrath, the Gospel of grace is deprived of its meaning. Even though many believers are slack in their service to God, God is still loving and patient. He wants everyone to repent and serve Him with zeal, with enthusiasm, with passion, and with gusto.

As one examines his or her own life, one can only know the true degradation of sin in all its horror and shame through the person of Christ Jesus upon the Cross. Just a brief glance toward the Cross of Jesus reveals the disgust and shame of sin's true colors. Christians are to live their lives with Christ as the very center of their lives. If one wishes to defeat the power of sin in one's life, this can only be done when Christ is enthroned in one's life. It is only in Christ that the influence of sin can be overpowered, or crushed. Are you seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness? Or is God second in your life? Do you look to His kingdom now and the final blessed hope with God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit in the eternal kingdom of God? Every Christian looks to the kingdom beyond this world and knows that the dissolution of death is not the final end, but rather it is the gateway to the glory of the eternal God. Are you insulting the Spirit of grace by your everyday life ([Hebrews 10:29](#))? Why not read this entire chapter (Hebrews 10) for the context of how one insults the Spirit of grace! **READ! READ! READ!**

Again, one must ask himself or herself, what does life under the Cross of Christ mean to me? One can say that one's life under the Gospel is the opening of one's heart to Christ Jesus. Is Christ, first in your life? This opening of one's life to Christ enables one to bring forth fruits that result in God's glory. When one allows God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit the right of way in one's life, then this individual maintains consciousness of God's Good News that makes oneself available to be a channel that portrays His kingdom with a view of welcoming the fullness of God's glory. Again, what does the Church mean to you? What does it mean to assemble with the saints during the week? Unfortunately, many Christians abandon the assembling of themselves with other believers.

Yet, a life under the Gospel is a life that is active in the Church. Life in the Christian community is not only something between Christ and the individual, but it is also life in the Body of Christ. In other words, if one acknowledges Jesus Christ as Lord in one's existence, this acknowledgement involves one's sharing his faith with others. To be a Christian means to be incorporated into the Body of Christ. The Church is the fellowship whereby the Gospel of God continues to be proclaimed throughout the world. Every individual is nourished through the Church. As one witnesses Christian baptism and the Lord's Supper, one is constantly reminded of one's life under the Gospel. Life in the Church is not isolationism. Christians should identify themselves with other believers.

Have you discarded the need for the Church in your way of life? One should never forget that the function of the internal life of the Church is to enable Christians to grow together in the Body of Christ. Jesus purchased the Church with His blood. The ultimate authority for the Church is found in the authority of God in His Revelation. Also, it is through the proclamation of the Good News of God that one discovers the function of the Church in society. Out of the Good News of God, one discovers the kingdom foretold by the prophets ([Daniel 2](#), [Isaiah 2](#), [Joel 2](#)). One can say that the

Gospel brought the Church into being and still keeps the Church in obedience to God. If the Church wishes to be a witness to the world, it must again and again search the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments for those Scriptures that testify about Jesus Christ as the promised Messiah. If the Church is unimportant, one wonders why the Holy Spirit wrote: “And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” ([Acts 2:47](#)).